

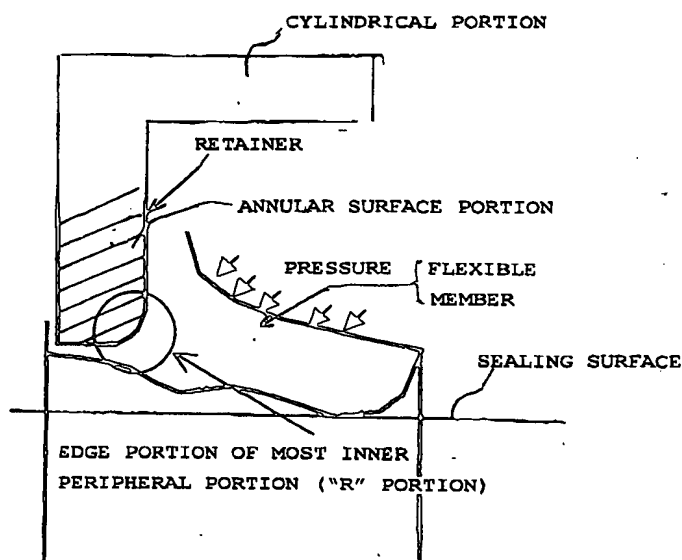
REMARKS

The rejection of Claims 1, 5 11 and 12 as being unpatentable over Friend et al in view of Cather, of Claims 2 and 8 as being unpatentable over Friend et al in view of Cather and Vegella, of Claim 3 as being unpatentable over Friend et al in view of Otto et al, Cather and Otto et al, of Claims 4, 6 and 7 as being unpatentable over Friend et al in view of Cather and Nagasawa, of Claim 9 as being unpatentable over Friend et al in view of Cather and Wada et al, of Claims 10/1 and 10/5 as being unpatentable over Staudt et al in view of Friend et al and Cather, of Claims 10/2 and 10/8 as being unpatentable over Staudt et al in view of Friend et al, Cather and Vegella, of Claim 10/3 as being unpatentable over Staudt et al in view of Friend et al, Cather and Otto et al, of Claims 10/4, 10/6 and 10/7 as being unpatentable over Staudt et al in view of Friend et al, Cather and Nagasawa, and of Claim 10/9 as being unpatentable over Staudt et al in view of Friend et al, Cather and Wada et al are traversed.

Reconsideration of the rejections is requested on the grounds that they do not set forth a *prima facie* case of obviousness based, in light of the above amendments, on substantial record evidence. That is, even if Friend et al as hypothetically Cather, would have resulted in a backing ring as alleged at page 10 of the Office Action, the seal mechanism of amended Claim 1 and the high pressure fuel pump of amended Claim 10 would not have resulted. In addition, applicants still maintain that the basic combination of Friend et al and Cather, central to all the rejections, is based upon impermissible hindsight. Therefore, a discussion of the Vegella, Otto et al, Nagasawa, Wada et al and Staudt et al

documents is completely unnecessary except to say that they further illustrate that impermissible hindsight has been employed by resorting to them in the absence of any clear teachings suggesting the several combinations. We note that the reasons provided in the Office Action for making the several hypothetical combinations do not arise from any teachings ^{on} the documents themselves but rather from applicants' teachings.

Applicants also repeat herein by reference their comments made in the Reply of November 1, 2002, with regard to the Friend et al document. It does not disclose a seal mechanism "substantially as claimed" as asserted in the Office Action, particularly in light of the admission therein, as to what it does not teach. These differences become particularly important in light of the above amendments to the claims which define a seal mechanism of the type shown below.



The Office Action does not offer any explanation as to why either Friend et al or Cather would have suggested modification of the former. The reference to the teaching of a way of preventing stress fracturing in Cather is unavailing. That teaching relates to a liner and how to prevent it from contacting any sharp corners. The relevance to the teaching of the present invention have not been sufficiently established.

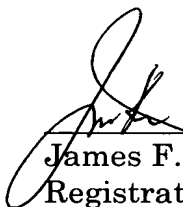
Accordingly early and favorable action are earnestly solicited.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #381AS/50347).

Respectfully submitted,

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